



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Public Hearing Testimony
Committee on Children
February 16, 2023



To: Sen. Ceci Maher, Chair
Rep. Liz Linehan, Chair
Sen. Lisa Seminara, Ranking Member
Rep. Anne Dauphinais, Ranking Member
Distinguished Members of the Committee on Children

From: Vannessa Dorantes, Commissioner
Department of Children and Families

Re: RB 1009, An Act Concerning Identified Adoptions

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) supports the passage of Raised Bill 1009, An Act Concerning Identified Adoptions. DCF partnered with the Probate Court administration and private adoption agencies to develop this bill. It updates the language in the identified adoption statutes and revises the probate statutes regarding payments by prospective adoptive parents to birth parents.

Notably, current law permits prospective identified adoptive parents to pay for several expenses on behalf of the birth parent, such as telephone costs, maternity clothing, and other living expenses, but caps such expenses at \$1,500. This bill eliminates this outdated cap and establishes clearer guidelines for these interactions by:

1. Requiring prospective adoptive parents making payments of more than \$2,000 to file a sworn affidavit in Probate Court itemizing all the costs that will be paid, which allows for greater transparency and tracking of financial interactions; and
2. Providing a defined timeframe during which payments by the adoptive parents to the birth parent may be made, which limits the possibility of overstepping the adoptive or birth parents' boundaries.

The bill permits adoptive parents to seek reimbursement for payments made only if the birth parent was knowingly not pregnant at the time that they received the payment, or if the birth parent received payments from other prospective adoptive parents without the adoptive parents' knowledge.

Additionally, the use of the terms “genetic parent” or “pregnant parent” instead of “birth mother” contributes to our statewide mission of creating more inclusive legislation. Not all birth parents identify as women or mothers, and it is important that our statutes recognize them.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.